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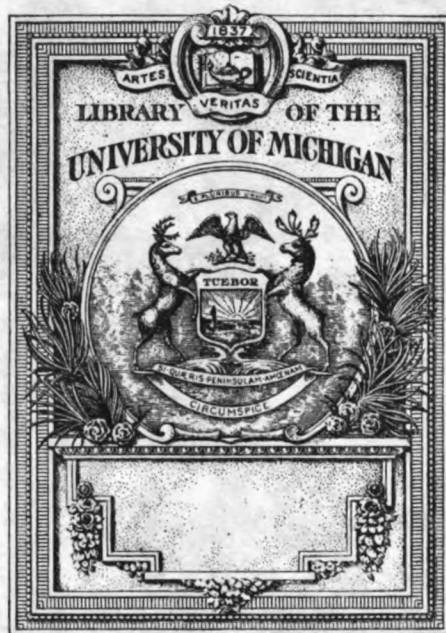


Ext. Brit. Foreign office Correspondence with U. S.

Safety of alien enemies repatriated from India on the S. S.
"Golconda"

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MISCELLANEOUS. No. 4 (1916).

CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

RESPECTING THE

**SAFETY OF ALIEN ENEMIES REPATRIATED
FROM INDIA ON THE S.S. "GOLCONDA."**

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.
January 1916.*

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Correspondence with the United States Ambassador respecting the Safety of Alien Enemies Repatriated from India on the s.s. "Golconda."

No. 1.

*Mr. Page, United States Ambassador in London, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received
January 4.)*

THE American Ambassador presents his compliments to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, with reference to Mr. Page's note of the 15th September last, concerning the Reverend Richard Handmann interned at Ahmednagar, has the honour to transmit herewith copies of a note, dated the 7th ultimo, of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office, and of the petition therewith enclosed, dated 1st September last, by the Reverend O. R. Handmann, relative to the repatriation of the wives and children of the married men of Camp B, Ahmednagar.

*United States Embassy, London,
January 3, 1916.*

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

*Note verbale from the Austro-Hungarian Government to United States Embassy
in Vienna.*

Vienna, December 7, 1915.

WITH reference to the esteemed *note verbale*, dated 27th ultimo, and in continuation of its *note verbale* of the same date, in regard to the petition made by the Reverend O. R. Handmann on behalf of the married men of B Camp at Ahmednagar, relative to the repatriation of their wives and children, the Imperial and Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs would feel much obliged if the American Embassy in London could be requested to transmit the enclosed copy of the aforesaid petition to the British Government and to inform them that the Imperial and Royal Government will hold them responsible for the lives and well-being of these passengers, the majority of whom are better-class people, who are being forcibly repatriated in war time and against the will of their husbands and fathers.

Regarding paragraph 7 of the petition, the Ministry would be greatly obliged if the American Embassy in London could also be asked to enquire from the British Government the names of the ports at which the steamer will call on her journey, and to instruct the American consuls there to kindly assist the passengers in the best way possible, as it will in all probability be forbidden them to land and to visit the American consul.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

*The Rev. C. R. Handmann, Prisoner of War, B Camp, Ahmednagar, to United States
Consul, Bombay.*

Sir,

Ahmednagar, September 1, 1915.

AS our wives and children are being repatriated within a very short time, we take the liberty to approach on their behalf, asking you to give your full assistance, in kind compliance with the following suggestions which are foremost in our minds:—

1. That suitable and sufficient accommodation in cabins be provided, including a sufficient number of stewardesses.
2. That a European doctor be in attendance during the whole voyage.
3. That proper attention be given to the question of food on board, with special regard to sick ladies and to children.

4. That all belligerent nations be duly and in time advised of the name, route, and date of departure of the steamer.
5. That the steamer bear distinct signs denoting its purpose.
6. That everything be done to assure the safety of the passengers.
7. That in every port at which the steamer calls the American consul be requested to come on board to enquire after the welfare of the passengers and to eventually redress any grievances.
8. That the passengers be allowed to despatch letters from the various ports.
9. That at the port of destination all necessary arrangements be made to receive the passengers and to assist them in their onward journey.
10. That the American consul, Bombay, be advised by wire of the safe arrival of the steamer for our information.

We shall feel much obliged to you for giving your attention to the above-mentioned points, putting them before the authorities concerned, and further we shall be thankful if you would kindly come on board ship at the time of embarkation.

I have, &c.

(On behalf of married men, B Camp),
O. R. HANDMANN.

No. 2.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Page, United States Ambassador in London.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, January 10, 1916.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 3rd instant transmitting a *note verbale* of the 7th December, 1915, from the Austro-Hungarian Government. With the note is enclosed a petition from an Austro-Hungarian subject now on his way as prisoner-of-war from India to this country in the steamship "Golconda," due here in a few days' time. Some of the requests in the petition would have received favourable consideration had it reached His Majesty's Government in time, and some of them have no doubt been conceded as a matter of course.

With regard to that portion of the petition which asks that special precautions may be taken to prevent danger to the lives of the "Golconda" passengers by submarine attack, I feel bound to express my astonishment that the Austro-Hungarian Government, themselves one of the authors of the danger, should have thought it seemly to endorse this request. Not content, however, with doing this, the Austro-Hungarian Government further state that they will hold His Majesty's Government responsible for the lives and well-being of those passengers, "the majority of whom are better-class people." I am at a loss to know why "better-class people" should be thought more entitled to protection from submarine attack than any other non-combatants; but however that may be, the only danger of the character indicated which threatens any of the passengers on the "Golconda" is one for which the Austro-Hungarian and German Governments are alone responsible. It is they, and they only, who have instituted and carry on a novel and inhuman form of warfare, which disregards all the hitherto accepted principles of international law, and necessarily endangers the lives of non-combatants. By asking for special precautions to protect one of their own subjects on board a British merchant vessel the Austro-Hungarian Government recognise what is the inevitable consequence of their submarine policy, and admit that the outrages by which the "Lusitania," the "Persia," and numbers of other ships have been sunk without warning, were not the result of the casual brutalities of the officers of enemy submarines, but part of the settled and premeditated policy of the Governments whom they serve.

It is needless to add that His Majesty's Government do not propose to take any precautions on behalf of Austro-Hungarian subjects which they do not take on behalf of their own, and that if they suffer any injury from submarine attack on the part of His Majesty's enemies, the responsibility must rest solely with those who have made such attacks part of their ordinary methods of warfare.

The proper and sufficient protection from this danger is that Austria-Hungary and Germany should observe ordinary rules of humanity in their methods of warfare.

I have, &c.

E. GREY.

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